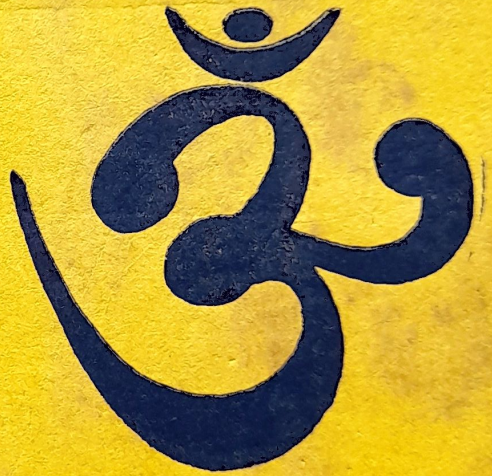


BUDDHISM IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH HINDUISM



BY
ANAGARIKA HEWAVITARNE DHARMAPALA

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Founder of the Maha Bodhi Society

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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Editor, Indian Mirror

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DEDICATION

As a tribute of sincere love I dedicate this first of my lectures delivered in English to an Indian audience, to the beloved memory of the late Rai Bahadur Sri Norendra Nath Sen, Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, and President of the Maha Bodhi Society, a true-hearted friend of the Buddhists, who often times expressed his spiritual conviction that the sufferings of India will not be removed until the long forgotten teachings of the Lord of Compassion are again assimilated by her children.

The Anagarika Brahmachari

H. DHARMAPALA.

Maha Bodhi Society Headquarters,

4-A, College Square,

Calcutta, 8th April, $\frac{2461}{1918}$.

FOREWORD

Brother Anagarika Dharmapala has asked me to write a foreword to the pamphlet which he proposes to publish as a loving tribute to the memory of my late revered father and I gladly accede to his request. Any narrative of the revival of Buddhism in India during the latter end of the Nineteenth Century which did not contain a reference to the memorable part taken therein by the late Rai Bahadur Norendra Nath Sen would not only be incomplete and inaccurate but unjust and unfair to his memory in view of the rare courage and conviction with which he espoused the cause of Buddhism in India at a time when Buddhists had so few friends in this country. "In Buddhism lies unity" he used to say and although his labours were heavy and his activities many-sided, the sacred cause of Buddhism was ever foremost in his heart. He was always ready to extend the hand of Brotherhood to individual labourers in the field as well as to the propaganda itself. Buddhist pilgrims who passed through Calcutta on their way to holy shrines blessed Norendra Nath Sen for the encouragement and help they received from him. He befriended Buddhism with unflinching and unwavering earnestness so that there was never an endeavour in the Buddhist field in India that did not receive his whole-hearted support. The Maha Bodhi Society had no truer

friend ; undaunted by the jeers and gibes of his more orthodox countrymen he lent the whole weight of his influential support in popularising that movement amongst his Hindu countrymen. Since the inauguration of the sacred Vaisakha day in Calcutta under the auspices of the Society he did not allow a single occasion to pass without taking a prominent part in its celebrations. The columns of his Journal, the *Indian Mirror*, were freely thrown open to all who desired to say a good word for Buddhism and Buddhists. He wrote powerful leaders in its columns advocating the union of Hinduism and Buddhism and never concealed his conviction that in the final fusion of the two great faiths lay the future salvation of India. The fact that Buddhism has gained a firm footing in Bengal today is in no small measure due to his earnest, able and powerful advocacy. A most influential Hindu nobleman of unimpeachable orthodoxy was so highly impressed by his annual utterances that he wrote to express his admiration for the new light in which he had presented the religion of Gautama Buddha to the Hindu public. Norendra Nath Sen's interest in Buddhism was not academical. He made daily homage to the great Tathāgata using for the purpose a small bronze image which had been given him by the Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala. Placing the image above his head he made a

daily confession of his allegiance to the great Cause and consecrated himself anew to its service. One of the dreams of his life was to see a large and beautiful temple erected in Calcutta but unfortunately he did not live to see it realized. But such whole-hearted and untiring devotion could not remain without result and if the Maha Bodhi Society has at last been successful in arranging for the construction of a beautiful Vihara for enshrining the Taxila relic of the Great Teacher it is undoubtedly due to the blessings of one of its greatest friends and benefactors who has not forgotten his work on earth but still directs it with his strong will.

SATYENDRA NATH SEN,

Editor, Indian Mirror.

Dated the 13th April, 1918.

BENGALI NEW YEAR'S DAY.

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Buddhism In Its Relationship With Hinduism

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

On Sunday, the 25th October, 1891, at 6 P.M. a lecture on the above subject was delivered by Mr. Dharmapala Hewavitarne, a Sinhalese gentleman of note, at the Albert Hall, before a fairly large audience. Babu Norendra Nath Sen was in the chair.

The chairman said he had great pleasure to introduce to the audience the lecturer of the evening, Mr. Dharmapala Hewavitarne. He was a leading representative of the Buddhists of Ceylon. He had come to India as their chosen delegate for the express purpose of seeing that Buddha Gaya was made over again to the legitimate claimants, the Buddhists, and the Buddhism might once flourish in India, its ancient home. So earnest were the Sinhalese Buddhists in their desire in this respect that they had established a Society at Colombo, called "The Buddha Gaya Maha Bodhi Society," of which their High Priest Sumangala was the president and the lecturer was the Secretary. The chief object of this Society was to take every practical step for restoring Buddha Gaya to the Buddhists. The Society had the sympathy and support not only of the Buddhists of

Ceylon, but also of those of China, Japan, Burma and Siam. A Conference of delegates from different Buddhistic countries was to take place very shortly at Buddha Gaya itself, and these delegates proposed to meet His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the subject at Gaya, during his present tour in Behar. The earnestness of spirit, which animated the Buddhists in this matter, was a most significant sign of the time, and one worthy of note by the thinking portion of the Community. The wave of Indian progress had begun to roll on in its course. No earthly power was capable of resisting it. The lecturer brought a message of love and peace to them from his Buddhistic brethren. They should remember that they were once members of the same happy family India, which was the birth-place of Lord Buddha and the original home of Buddhism, was looked upon by all Buddhists with such sanctity that nothing was so near their hearts as to be able to lay down their bones on the soil on which their Master lived, preached, and died.

THE SPEECH

Mr. Dharmapala Hewavitarne then delivered the following lecture :—

Nineteen centuries ago, St. Paul, the Christian Initiate, speaking to the cultured Athenians, said "that they worsh-

ipped him whom they knew not—the unknown God.” The Athenians listened to his interpretation, and St. Paul preached Christ to them. Six centuries previous to this, for the first time in the history of the world, a Greater Reformer—nay the Greatest the world has ever seen, preached to the Indian Aryan, not an abstract principle, but a realistic doctrine, and promulgated a system of religion, free from all superhuman agencies, and devoid of anthropomorphic conceptions.

The message that I bring to you is one of love, of purity and of self-control, a simple re-echoing of the idealistic doctrine that was preached twenty-five centuries ago in the Deer Park, at Rishipatana in Benares, to a company of five Ascetic Brahmans. It was Prince Siddhartha who, after acquiring the stored wisdom of ages by deep and careful study, and examining asceticism in all its phases for six long years, discovered the law of Truth for the attainment of beatitude by liberating the human being from his own acts.

The day in which this grand discovery was made, opened a new era in the history of man and thought. The doctrine of supreme purification and intelligence, the panacea, which was revealed to this world, has given relief to hundreds of millions of human beings, converted many of them into

sages and saints, and has given a thorough moral tone to the religions of the world. To many of you, the subject may not appear new, but there is a novelty in the delivery of it. It is nearly after seven centuries of silence that the tocsin is to be struck, and therefore I say that this message has a significance to the spiritual-minded. Some of you may not care to listen ; but the time has come to clear away the misconceptions that exist in the minds of the educated regarding Buddhism. Those who attach an importance to the theory of cycles, may better understand and realize the significance of what I shall have to say. Buddhism has been forgotten during the last seven centuries by the people of India, not a vestige of it is to be found in Buddhistic shape in the length and breadth of this great country, though it existed and flourished for centuries. It is a problem that has not been yet satisfactorily solved and the strangest misconceptions prevail about the disappearance of Buddhism from India. A religion, that moulded the destinies of the Indian nation in its brightest, palmiest and most glorious days to have been so absolutely forgotten, every vestige of it effaced,—this seems the more strange the more we think of it. The other fact is that during the past centuries India never progressed, but retrograded intellectually and spiritually. The best historians and the most impartial writers of India have admitted that at no time was India

more in her glory than when the Buddhistic system was prevailing, and the startling fact remains that with the loss of Buddhism a reign of inanition set in. The darkest days of India were during the Mohammedan period, and the religion of enlightenment was nowhere to be found. Bigotry, intolerance, persecution worked heavily during this period, and this lasted till the advent of a more humane and tolerant nation. The past one hundred years had been a kind of filing off the rust which had accumulated during the dark period, and we see now a spirit of tolerance setting in. Education is spreading and with it the expansion of intellect. With the progress of thought man aspires to independence to grapple with the mighty problems to which theology gives no consistent and satisfactory answer.

Looking back we find that in the unprogressive and undeveloped state of the mind of man, he always looks for extraneous help. The powers of nature seem to him so grand and awe-inspiring that in his poverty of intellect to solve them, he apotheosises and commences adoring them. Hence we find polytheism in the early days. With the gradual expansion of the intellect he soars high and finds that the gods are not outside the laws of nature. Polytheism gives place to monotheism which again gives place to crude

pantheism. This gradual evolution of thought we find in the Vedas and the Upanishads. An ideal pantheism next enters the arena of thought whose philosophy we find in the Bhagavat Gītā depicted here and there in its perfectness. The metaphysic of the Upanishads seems contradictory, because we see therein the gradual evolution of thought as exhibited by different writers. The Vedas, however sublime, were unsatisfactory for the solution of deeper problems, hence we see the monotheistic conceptions giving way to pantheism as embodied in the Upanishads. The older the Upanishads, the stronger is the colouring of monotheism, until we see a gradual disappearance of that theistic conception in the later Upanishads. From this monotheistic pantheism was developed the more idealistic phase of thought culminating in the promulgation of the highest system of philosophy "which has in it the eternity of a universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indestructible element of faith in final good and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom" (Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia.*)

"The object of the Upanishads was to show the utter uselessness, nay the mischievousness of all ritual performances, to condemn every sacrificial act which has for its motive a desire of hope of reward, to deny, if not the existence at least the exceptional and exalted character of the Devas and to teach that there is no hope of salvation

and deliverance except by the individual self recognising the true and universal self." This is what Max Müller said in his Hibbert Lectures on the Upanishads.

It is almost generally admitted that the Bhagavat Gītā contains a Philosophy more comprehensive and compact than the Philosophy of the Upanishads. Now it will appear strange to those who take Buddhism as a system of materialism to be pointed out the remarkable identity of doctrines in the Buddhist Books and the Gītā. But Buddhism goes deeper into the mysteries of life.

No better authority can be quoted than that erudite scholar, the translator of the Bhagavat Gītā Mr. Justice Telang of Bombay. He says, "Buddhism is perfectly intelligible as an outcome of that play of thought on high spiritual topics which—in its other and, as we may say, less thoroughgoing manifestations—we see in the Upanishads and the Gītā..... The Upanishads with the Gītā and the Precepts of Buddha appear to me to be the successive embodiments of the spiritual thought of the age."

The absurd idea that Buddhism is *Nāstika* was first started by Professor H. H. Wilson. The keynote was struck by him, and other Orientalists, who followed him, simply reiterated the assertion, until it was contradicted by Mr. Telang. Allusion was made in the Gītā to the Chārvākas;

and Professor Wilson in his ignorance of the doctrines of Buddhism had taken it for granted that the Chārvākas were Buddhists.

The *Chārvākas* were the sensual materialists of India. I am of opinion that Professor Wilson got the idea from his Sanskrit teachers who were likewise ignorant of the philosophy of Buddhism. If there ever was a teacher who systematically combatted the views of materialists, it was the Buddha. Even to-day Brahmin scholars have put down in the most careless way Buddhism as a *nāstika* system. They may as well condemn the Upanishads and the Gītā wherein the uselessness of ritual performances is demonstrated.

Buddhism is the highest expression of philosophic thought. The highest spiritual conception are to be found therein. "Its moral code is one of the most perfect the world has ever known," says Max Müller. And in the opinion of the late Professor Kunte "the Buddhistic Yoga Philosophy is more transcendental than the Yoga system of Patanjali. In its comprehensiveness in ethics, transcendental metaphysics and Yoga, no system can compare with the Buddhistic one, because it is the highest aspect or rather the climax of Aryan Philosophy." Some of the more sympathetic writers on Buddhism have attempted to shew that it is a system of agnostic philosophy, others take it as a pessimistic doctrine,

while still others find in it nothing but a doctrine of blank negation and annihilation ! That distinguished Pali Scholar, Dr. Rhys Davids, calls Buddha the agnostic philosopher of India. He says : "There has always arisen at last a school to whom theological discussions have lost their interest, and who have sought for a new solution in a new system in which man was to work out here, on earth, his own salvation. It is their place in the progress of thought that helps to understand how it is that there is so much in common between the agnostic philosopher of India, the Stoics of Greece and Rome, and some of the newest schools in France, in Germany and among ourselves." Because the first of the four truths which Buddha taught was based on the idea that existence is misery, Buddhism was condemned as a pessimistic system. But Buddhists are in safe company both ways : Spencer and his school on the one hand, Schopenhauer and his school on the other. Buddha was never an agnostic, neither did he preach a pessimistic doctrine. The former idea is based on the silence that Buddha observed when Mālunkya questioned Him as to the origin of the universe. Where is the pessimism in a system which teaches a realistic idealism ? Where is the pessimism of the Nirvāṇic swimming in the sea of calmness and delight and exemplified in the life of Buddha and the

Arhats? That Buddhism is materialistic and nihilistic is also the cry of the superficial Orientalist. Max Müller has exploded this theory, still the cry is continued that Nirvāna is annihilation. Time and a better knowledge of the doctrines of Buddhism will alone remove this misconception.

With the progress of education and development of intellect, the barriers raised by priestcraft and selfishness, between man and man, will be removed; and man breathing a purer air of love, will see that it is far better that a spirit of brotherliness should be fostered for the elevation of humanity. Then and then alone, will Buddhism be appreciated.

What did the Tathāgata Buddha promulgate as the basic doctrines of Buddhism? The Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eight-Fold Path. He began: There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus the one of sensuality, and the other of asceticism. The one low, ignoble, sensual, unworthy and unprofitable for the attainment of spiritual happiness; the other painful, unworthy and unprofitable. There is a middle Path (Majjhimā Patipadā) discovered by the Tathāgata—a path which leads to peace of mind, to the (higher wisdom) to full enlightenment, to Nirvana.

Before proceeding any further, I wish to lay stress on the fact that the Buddhists of Ceylon have come to the

conclusion that the time has arrived for them to revive the relationship, that existed a long time ago, between Ceylon and India. In an evil hour, India passed into the hands of the Moslems, and with it the friendly feeling that existed between the Buddhists of other countries and India was forgotten. I shall presently show you with what bigotry the Mussulman Conquerors destroyed the Buddhist as well as the Hindu shrines. The best of the former were destroyed nevertheless, some were utilized or rather altered to suit their own purposes. Dr. Sherring, in one of his elaborate papers contributed to the "Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal," has shown the number of Buddhist shrines, destroyed by the Mohammedans in Benares, whilst he mentions how a few were converted into Musjids. Mohammedan writers themselves have commented on the work of destruction, initiated by Mahammad of Ghazni and others. The late Dr. R. L. Mitter, in his "Orissa Antiquities" wrote thus. "The belief is pretty common that a general persecution headed by Sankarāchārya was the main cause of its (Buddhism) disappearance, and that a long protracted war was carried on to effect that object. There is nothing however in the records of the Buddhists and Hindus to support it. Volumes upon volumes have been read and analysed, but as yet without affording a single trace of anything like a protracted war

between the two sects. The two lives extant of Sankara are perfectly silent on the subject, and nowhere show that great Vedāntist and reformer ever used other than legitimate polemical weapons to overcome his opponents, and his character of a mendicant afforded him but scant opportunities to persecute rival sects." Professor Wilson is of opinion "that it is popular to ascribe to Sankara the work of persecution ; he does not appear at all, occupied in that odious task, not is engaged in particular controversy with any of the Bauddhas, the most prominent objects of his opposition are the Mīmāṃsakas, as represented by Madana Misra, with whom he holds a long and rather acrimonious discussion, and the Nyāyakas and Sāṅkhyas ; and the vulgar sects of Vaishnavas and Saivas ; he is especially hostile to the latter and particularly to the Kapalikas, a class of Siva worshippers who again are his most active enemies, and on one occasion assail his existence."

It is generally admitted that Sankarāchārya lived in the early part of the ninth century, and in his time Buddhism had a living existence in Bahlika country, a region identified by name and geographical position with the modern Balkh, and in Kashmere, also in Magadha, Bengal, and other provinces. Alberuni, who lived in the early part of the eleventh century, says : The Mohammedans laterly

ruined their prosperity and performed those wonderful exploits by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust, scattered in all directions. This is the reason why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places where our hand cannot yet reach—to Kashmere, Benares and other places.” In Elliot’s “History of the Mahomedan Period” we read that the Buddhist religion was evidently the one prevailing in Sindh, when the Mussalmans first came in contact with Indian superstition. There are several indications of the Buddhist religion prevailing at the period in the Valley of the Indus, not only from the specific announcement of the Chinese Travellers, and the declaration of Ibn Khurdeba to the effect, but from certain incidental allusions of the Arabic writers made without any particular reference to the factions of Brahmins and Pandits. To this may be added the negative evidence, afforded by the evidence of any mention of priestcraft or other pontifical assumption, of widow burning, of burnt sacrifice, of cow-worship, of ablutions, of penances or of other observances and ceremonies peculiar to the tenets of Brahminical faith.” Al Beruni, the Mohammedan historian, who lived in the middle of the ninth century, says Mohammed destroyed the water courses, destroyed the men capable of bearing arms, but the

ministers of the temple to the number of 6,000 were taken captive."

In the eleventh century Buddhism was still flourishing in Kashmere, Magadha, and other places in India. Our authorities are the Tibetan records or rather the Indian records, now lying in the temple archives of the Bod Yul (Tibet) "Isolated among inaccessible mountains, the convents of Tibet have remained unregarded and almost unvisited by the scholar and the traveller. In complete preservation the volumes of Buddhist faith, in their original Sanskrit as well as in faithful translation which might be sought in vain on the continent of India, are to be found in Tibet," said the great Hungarian traveller Korosi.

In the beautiful life of Sriñāna Dipankara, the great Buddhist hierarch of Magadha, translated from the Tibetan by Babu Sarat Chandra Das, and published in the "Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society," it is written the "King Lama Yesehed of Tibet sent seventeen young monks to Kashmere, Magadha and other places of India where pure Buddhism still prevailed." This was in 1025. Sriñāna was born of a royal family in Bengal, and was known throughout Siam, Burma, Tibet and Ceylon for his great learning and holiness. At the repeated requests of the king of Tibet, he visited that country in 1038 A. C., and during his

residence of 13 years there, he wrote several works on the Mahayana Buddhism. He died in 1053 near Lhasa at the age of 73. He is remembered with deep veneration all over high Asia. Bogle, who visited Tibet in 1779, in one of his interviews, heard the Grand Lama making the following observation :—"The Lama had temples in Benares and Gaya, and at other places that their priests used to travel there to study the *Shāstras* and the religion of the Brahmins, that about eight hundred years ago, Bengal was invaded and conquered by the Mussalmans who destroyed the temples and plundered the people, so that such as escaped returned to these mountains along with some Brahmins, who fled from persecution, since which time the inhabitants of Tibet have had little connection with Bengal or Southern countries." The last massacre took place in 1202 A.C., at Odantapuri. Two thousand Buddhist monks were put to death by Bakhtiyar Khilji. After this event, Buddhism disappeared from the land of its birth. Though efforts were made one or two centuries later to plant colonies of Buddhist Bhikshus at the central shrine of Buddha Gaya, all of them failed. You will, therefore, see that it was the iconoclastic Mohammedan that destroyed Buddhism in India.

The spread of education naturally liberalizes the mind of man and, as a matter of fact we see the results. The seed

of Buddhism takes root only on the healthy soil of a freed intellect. Buddhism is for the thoughtful alone. After an exile of nearly seven centuries, Buddhism has been brought again back to its home. Whether it will flourish in modern soil of young India, remains to be seen. It was in January last in the company of a Japanese Buddhist priest that I visited Buddha Gaya. As ordinary pilgrims we visited the sacred site ; but seeing the place neglected and uncared for, we decided to remain, pledging ourselves not to leave the place, until we saw that it was put under the care of its legitimate custodians—the Buddhist Bhikshus. I opened up communications with some of the most eminent Hindus, asking their sympathy, and one and all sent me the most sympathetic letters wishing us all success in the work. My friend, the Japanese priest, and I sent a joint letter to the Buddhists of Japan, and I wrote to the Buddhists of Siam, Burma and Ceylon. A few European officials to whom I wrote sent sympathetic replies. Newspaper editors promised us help. The opportunity once lost never comes again. I therefore started off to Ceylon and on the 31st May last, Buddha Gaya Maha Bodhi Society, under the presidency of the Maha Nāyaka Sumangala, the High Priest, was organised. On the 17th of July, four Bhikshus were sent from

Ceylon to permanently reside at Buddha Gaya. A plot of ground was purchased near the sacred shrine for the erection of a monastery for their residence. At present the shrine at Buddha Gaya is neglected, and it is painful to see the desecration that is daily going on without a protest from anybody. The legal custodians are the professors of the faith ; but so long as they are not allowed to hold guardianship over the shrine, desecration will continue. I appeal to you whether it is right that the most "antique memorial" of India should be allowed to rot and decay. Some of the most graceful statues of Buddha are lying under rubbish. Asoka columns depicting the life and manners of the people of India 2,000 years ago, have been utilised by the Mahant to build his kitchen.

As Buddha is held at least by the Hindus as an Avatār there should be no hostility shown to the Buddhists in their attempt to re-occupy the place. For nearly seventeen centuries, Buddhism flourished in this sacred soil and the peaceful civilization that she enjoyed under the Buddhist kings helped to develop her arts, sciences and commerce. The Greek historian and the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims have described in their works what they saw in ancient India. Megasthenes, Hiuen Tsiang, Fa-Hian and others who visited India in the early centuries have all testified to what they

had found in Buddhistic India. That contentment, that simplicity, that gentleness which were the characteristics of the ancient Aryan were observed even by the Mohammedans. Alidrisi writing in the 12th century about the Indians says : "They are naturally inclined to justice, and depart from it in their actions." The noble edicts of Asoka the Great, show with what ardent devotion he promulgated that spirit of gentleness and tolerance. The Buddhist sculptures at Sanchi and Ajanta Cave paintings bring before us the panorama of a gentle, peaceful people in the Buddhist times. A more joyous, contented race, it is impossible to imagine. The Aryan Buddhists in that spirit of altruism to spread humane precepts of the Master, penetrated to the then known regions of China, Tibet, Burma, Kashmere, Graeco-Bactrian, and other countries. Wherever they went they gave the impulse for the development of science and literature. Dr. Edkins says ; "That the Hindu Buddhists should have taught the Chinese how to write the sounds of the language by an artifice which required nothing but their own hieroglyphics, and rendered unnecessary the introduction of new symbols, is sufficient evidence of their ingenuity, and is not the least of the services they have done to the sons of Han. Tibetans and probably the Koreans also owe their alphabets, which are

both arranged in the Sanskrit, to the Buddhists." Mr. Basil Hall Chamberlain, the eminent Sinologist, says :—"The oldest Japanese books were written after the introduction of Buddhism. Japan owes her formation as a nation to Buddhism. It was in the train of priests that all arts were introduced."

For nearly seventeen centuries, this religion of love had a home in this land, and the Aryan nation was then still a living nation, developing its arts, sciences and literature. 'It is to Buddhist impulses that Indian architecture owes its development. Medicine was studied at its best in centres of Buddhist learning. Public hospitals, which the Buddhist Princes established in every city, were probably the true schools of Indian medicine. On the decline of Buddhism, public hospitals were abolished and everything that tended further progress came to an end. All arts declined with the decline of Buddhism. Much of what achieved was also under Buddhist influences, and bore the mark of Buddhism," (Dr. Hunter). In that splendid "*History of the Civilization of Ancient India*," Mr. R. C. Dutt says :—"It was in the Buddhist age that the most brilliant results were achieved in Astronomy for six centuries after 1200 A.D., the history of the Hindus is a blank," It was Korosi, the great Hungarian traveller, who wrote the prophetic words that in the Temples of Tibet were to be found in a state of

complete preservation the volumes of Buddhist faith in their original Sanskrit. The gems of Indian literature now lost may yet be obtained, if the long lost religion is again welcomed by the sons of India. The Milton of India, Kshemendra, who lived in Kashmere, whose incomparable epic on the life of Buddha which for its sublimity and expression has no rival, was a Buddhist. This unique poem, "Avadāna Kalpalatā" is now being published under the Government of Bengal. Babu Sarat Chandra Das calls it the 'Lost Gem of India.' It will be for the good of India, and the world, if her educated sons welcome back their ancient faith, which teaches the grandest, noblest, and the most elevating doctrines. The characteristics of the teacher are given in the Tevijja Sutta of Digha Nikāya thus: "Know, Vāsettha, that a Tathāgata is born into the world a fully enlightened one, blessed and worthy, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy, with knowledge of the world, unsurpassed as a guide to erring mortals, a teacher of gods and men, a Blessed Buddha. He by himself, thoroughly understands, and sees, as it were, face to face this universe—the world below with all its spirits and the world above, of Māra and of Brahma—and all creatures, Samanas and Brahmanas, god and men, and He then makes his knowledge known to the others. The truth doth He proclaim, both in

its spirit, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation, the higher life doth He make known, in all its purity, and in all its perfectness"—Rhys Davids.

For the first time in the history of the world, Buddha proclaimed a salvation, which each man could gain for himself and by himself in this world during this life, without the least help from a personal God or Gods. He strongly inculcated the doctrines of self-reliance, of purity, of courtesy, of enlightenment, of peace and of universal love. He strongly urged the necessity of knowledge, for wisdom psychic insight could not be got in this life. Desire not to be re-born again and again ; nor for a cessation of existence in this one life ; desire not for the enjoyment of sensuality. Lead a life of purity, seek only the fruits of the Fourfold Path of Holiness which lead to Nirvāṇa. These were the teachings of Buddha. A system, so pre-eminently practical and anti-ritualistic, had never been promulgated before by any religious reformer. Metaphysical speculation, hair splitting discourses, the Buddha condemned as useless and profitless. Having found out that happiness consists in the realization of Truth and working for the welfare of others, He preached that a life of active altruism was the best and noblest which a man could lead, He taught that good should be done for its own sake, and for the sake of others,

and by His example of absolute self-sacrifice, He showed His followers what they should do. The most exalted virtue was the ideal that Buddha held up before the world. The Four Noble Truths that He promulgated were—

1. Corporeal Existence is misery.
2. Desire is the producing cause of sorrow.
3. Happiness consists in the extinction of all egoistic desires.
4. The way to get that happiness lies in the Noble Eightfold Path.

Buddhism is a causative philosophy in that it discourages vain search after a Creator, or the origin of the world and of Man. "As to the origin of the Universe with all its unceasing changes, Buddha taught men to stand before this overpowering problem in silence. This doctrine of a continuous change has, moreover within the last fifty years, received the sanction of Science, under the name of conservation of energy." In the Pratitya Samutpāda dharma, the law of causation, the Buddha showed that *everything* is subject to the law of cause and effect. And that *everything* is constantly and yet imperceptibly changing. The whole cosmos is subject to this law, and Gods and men form no exception. The highest point in the scale of evolution is Man, according to Buddhism. So long as man yearns to

enjoy pleasure, yearns for continued birth, yearns to cease to exist, so long shall he continue to suffer. To emancipate himself, he has to tread the noble eight-fold path viz.

(1) *Samyak Drishti*—He has to believe the Law of Moral Retribution (karma) that every cause has its corresponding effect ; and the Law of Reincarnation.

(2) *Samyak Sankalpana*.—Leading a religious life in the forgetfulness of Self, and benefitting Humanity ; and loving all beings as one's self.

(3) *Samyak Vachana*—Speaking truth regardless of consequences ; to abstain from slander, abusive language, vain and idle talk.

(4) *Samyak Karmānta*.—Abstention from taking life, stealing, committing adultery, and taking intoxicating liquors.

(5) *Samyak Ājīva*.—Avoiding vicious professions, dealing in murderous weapons, poisons, flesh of animals and human beings.

(6) *Samyak Vyāyāma*.—To engender good thoughts, deeds and words, and to develop and foster them. To extinguish bad thoughts, etc., already developed. To abstain from engendering them.

(7) *Samyak Sati*.—Right thoughts consist in meditating upon the impermanence of matter, of sensations, of volition

of the mind, and keeping the mind free from impure thoughts.

(8) *Samyak Samādhi*.—Right concentration of the thinking principle. This is the goal of the Buddhist.

In the state of Samadhi, the Yogi realises the bliss of Nirvāna.

The following virtues must necessarily be cultivated :—

Dāna.—Charity.

Sila.—Altruism and living a pure life.

Naiskramya.—Renunciation of self.

Prajñā.—Wisdom.

Vīrya.—Dauntless energy that fights one's way to Nirvana.

Kshānti.—Untiring patience, under the most trying persecution.

Satya.—Truth under all trials and difficulties.

Adhithāna.—Will-power to create, and carry out one's pledges in the upward path.

Maitrī.—Universal love and kindness to all living beings.

Upekshā.—All tranquil perfect indifference to pain and pleasure, praise or blame.

The cultivation of these ten virtues is absolutely necessary for the attainment of Nirvāna. The highest

Brahmaloka—the “Nevasaññā Nāsaññāyatana”—though its duration is for numberless *kalpas*, yet the Buddhist is asked to shun it, for woe be to him who is born there, for after the termination of that long period, he has to begin life again, probably from the lowest state. He who treads the Noble Eightfold Path, Nirvāṇa is his.

The upward path is not difficult to him who observes the precepts. Self-control and purity of life are the essential qualifications, required of him who walks in the path.

In ancient Buddhist India, the highest form of freedom was enjoyed by woman equally with man. The highest path of spirituality was open to her. The history of Buddhism gives a beautiful picture of the state of women in that glorious era. The hymns composed by Buddhist nuns show the wonderful insight they had into human nature. The beautiful stories of Visakha, the noble woman and lay devotee of Buddha, affords no parallel in modern times. The philosophic learning and the exalted life of Prajapati Gotami, Khemā, Uppalavannā, Dhammadinnā, Nandī, Sonā, Yasodharā and a host of other pure-minded women, were the index to the state of womanhood in those days. Here is an extract from the Tibetan *Dulva*, (the Book of disciplinary rules) and I ask you whether the ideas conveyed therein may not compare with the best utterances of the

intellectual woman of today. The words were spoken by Yasodharā, the wife of Prince Siddhārtha :—"Sitting, standing and walking, those that are venerable are pleasing when not concealed. A bright gem will give more lustre, if put on the top of the standard. The man, excellent in virtue is pleasing when he speaks. As an example, does not the Karavika bird appear more beautiful when she chanteth her lovely song. They who have put off all vices are venerable. Fools committing vices, how-much-so-ever they be adorned, are never pleasing. Fraught with bliss is the gift of men who have renounced the company of the wicked. They that have a cunning heart are impudent and shameless, and having not the required qualities, do not speak the truth :—though they should cover their body even with thousand clothes, they would go about in the world more naked than the unclothed. They that subjugate their passions, and are chaste and are contented with their own husbands. and think not of any other, such women, when not concealed by a veil shine forth like the sun and moon, for such to what purpose is the veiling of the face."

In the Sigālovāda Sutta the duties of a wife are set forth. She is taught to show her affection to her husband, to look after the household affairs, to entertain kinsmen and friends who visit her husband and show them hospitality. The

child was taught to obey the parents and to be tender to all animal life ; the man to love his neighbour as himself ; to be true and just in all his dealings, and to look beyond the vain shows of the world for true happiness. Every shade of vice was guarded by special precepts. Dr. Beal in his "Chinese Buddhism" says : Buddhism tended to promote a love of morality and a healthy state of society by guarding it against vice of profligacy, and it has helped to raise the mind to a love of the beautiful in nature, and assisted in the advancement of art and literature. Buddhism not only supplemented the national faith, but it added to the strength of the morality of the people, raised and elevated their conceptions."

The civilization that India enjoyed before the Mohammedan conquest was suited her nature, and Mr. Seeley in his "Expansion of England" thinks rightly that a "Native Government, like that which preceded the Mohammedan invasion, not the threatened Mahratta domination, would suit India better." Then it must be based on a Buddhistic policy, and then alone will India be united into a compact whole. Then the doors of Tibet, closed for the last 800 years, will be again opened to India, and the blessings of 475 million of Buddhists will descend on her. "If there is anything in the intellectual, religious and moral legacies of our ancient forefathers, of which we can feel proud, it is

that sublime, pure and simple conception of a religious and moral system, which the world owes to Buddha. Educated Hindus need not hesitate in helping Buddhism to find a commanding and permanent footing once more in their midst, and to live in invigorating and mutually purifying amity with Hinduism itself." With these thoughtful words, which appeared in the *Hindu* of June 16th last, I conclude this address in the hope that educated India will work in sympathy with their Sinhalese Aryan brothers of Ceylon.

A cordial vote of thanks to the lecturer was given.—
From the Indian Mirror, 29th October, 1891.

The following leading article on the above speech appeared in the *Indian Mirror* on 3rd November, 1891 :—

FUTURE OF THE HINDU RACE

Our readers will, we trust, forgive us for reverting over and over again to the question of the future of the Hindu race. This is a question of such magnitude, and so many important issues are involved in its solution, that we should be doing less than our duty, if we keep ourselves quiet after what we had already said on the subject. As one of the Hindu people, their prosperity, happiness, and advancement are very near our heart, for we, a small unit, cannot separate ourselves from the whole body, without infinite misery. But our sorrow, as it is, is great enough to find the Hindu people come to a pass, when they must either go forward or drop by the wayside of human progress, unable to carry themselves where they should lead. The Hindus have been their own greatest enemies. Discord, jealousy, hatred, and social and religious feuds have made them what they are. They have long deserted their best and highest ideals, and the ancient altruistic faith has been replaced by the worship of self. It is this besetting sin, we cannot point out too often, which

has consummated the complete degradation of the Hindus. But the turning point may come to every one, the lost chance is given to all, and, we think, the turning point has come for the Hindus ; and we also believe, they are just now being given a last chance for reform and advancement. That has been our conviction for some considerable time, and many subsequent signs and events have confirmed the belief. All of us must have noticed a revival of religious and spiritual activity among the Hindus, and not only among them, but in almost every part of the civilised world. The most careless watcher of contemporary events cannot but have been struck with the fact that the religion of Lord Buddha, the ninth *Avatar* of Hinduism, is being more widely studied, and finds greater acceptance not only among the more cultured and thoughtful classes in India, but also everywhere in the West. And this is only natural. Hinduism by itself is a religion and anybody, the highest, would be proud to call himself one of its followers. But it is not the Hinduism as is being understood and practised by the Hindus of the present generation. Time has wronged true Hinduism, it has encumbered it with superstructures of unwise and superstitious doctrines. Even the Upanishads that embody the best and highest Vedic teachings, are not entirely free from the reproach, as was pointed out by Mr. Dharmapala

the other day in his lecture on Buddhism. But the religion preached by Buddha, containing the best that ever was in Hinduism has on the whole surved the ravages of time, and to-day it is as potent for human salvation as when Buddha preached the doctrine of Law and the Path. It is impossible to believe that the Hindus could have driven Buddhism out of India. On the contrary, Buddhism was accepted most largely in the land of its birth, and it was Buddhist missionaries from India that went forth East and West to preach the faith of their Master. India was never so civilised, prosperous, and happy as during the Buddhistic period. It was not the Hindus, then that, drove Buddhism out of India. As Mr. Dharmapala pointed out in his recent lecture, the vandal's work was done by the Moslem. If the Hindus then, at no time, had any animosity with the Buddhists, it may be accepted they will welcome a colony of them that proposes to settle itself at Buddha Gaya, the holy place where the Master became the Buddha. It is strange and remarkable that the Buddhists should have turned wistful eyes to India at the present time. India dates her misfortunes since the date of the disappearance of Buddhism. Why should not this unlooked for return of Buddhism in the form of a Buddhistic colony at Buddha Gaya bring back with it the hope that the Hindus will recover their place

among the great nations of the world ? This is not a mere vague undefined hope ; it is one which we expect to realise before long. The Buddhists form a very large portion of the world's population. The Hindus have kept themselves long aloof from the millions upon millions of Buddhists of China, Japan, Burma, Siam, Tibet and Ceylon. With the people of Ceylon, the people of Bengal have many things in common. Their languages resemble each other in many respects, and a continued line of Bengali kings for nearly a thousand years once reigned over the Sinhalese. Why should we, then, hesitate to take the hand which the Buddhists now proffer us in right, pure friendship ? It was India that gave them their saving faith. Should she not take them to her arms ? And in that case her sons will not be found only between the limited area, between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin, but her millions upon millions of sons outside and beyond will work for her with all the zeal and ardency of sons that had been disowned, but are now restored to their long lost mother's affections. Will the Hindus dare thus impede this noblest work of modern times ? We have better faith than that. We confidently look forward to a time of reunion, happiness and prosperity.

